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ABSTRACT

Designed to measure maturity of reading interests, the Sophistication of Reading Interests Scale consists of 29 pairs of fictitious story synopses, one of the pair more sophisticated than the other. Three indicators of level of maturity, defined in order of sophistication, are the importance of plot, the importance of characters, and the importance of ideas or theme. Content validity was established by asking 20 secondary teachers to judge the sophistication criteria and the level of sophistication of each synopsis in each dyad. Construct validity was established in part by comparing scores on the scale by younger and older students. The mean for 25 high ability seventh graders was 58.1 and for 21 high ability twelfth graders 67.7, a difference of 9.6 points, significant at .001. [This document is one of those reviewed in The Research Instruments Project (TRIP) monograph "Measures for Research and Evaluation in the English Language Arts" to be published by the Committee on Research of the National Council of Teachers of English in cooperation with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. A TRIP review which precedes the document lists its category (Literature), title, author, date, and age range (junior high, senior high), and describes the instrument's purpose and physical characteristics.] (JM)

NCTE Committee on Research

The Research Instruments Project (TRIP)

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The attached document contains one of the measures reviewed in the TRIP committee monograph titled:

Measures for Research and Evaluation
in the English Language Arts

TRIP is an acronym which signifies an effort to abstract and make readily available measures for research and evaluation in the English language arts. These measures relate to language development, listening, literature, reading, standard English as a second language or dialect, teacher competencies, or writing. In order to make these instruments more readily available, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills has supported the TRIP committee sponsored by the Committee on Research of the National Council of Teachers of English and has processed the material into the ERIC system. The ERIC Clearinghouse accession numbers that encompass most of these documents are CS 201 320-CS 201 375.

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CS 201 361

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
1111 KENYON ROAD
URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801

Category: Literature

Title: Sophistication of Reading Interests Scale

Author: Robert Zais

Age Range: Junior High, Senior High

Description of the Instrument:

Purpose: To measure maturity of reading interests.

Date of Construction: 1968

Physical Description: Requiring about thirty minutes to complete, the SRIS consists of twenty-nine pairs of fictitious story synopsis, one of the pair more "sophisticated" than the other. Five of the pairs are "false response checks." The three levels of maturity are defined as follows.

A book synopsis intended to be LEAST sophisticated in general emphasized the following characteristics:

1. *Plot is important* for its own sake
2. The plot is hackneyed and employs standard or implausible devices
3. Conflict (if any) is physical, rather than psychological
4. Characters are stereotyped and are introduced merely as vehicles for the action.

A book synopsis intended to be MODERATELY sophisticated in general emphasized the following characteristics:

1. *Characters are important* and are individualized to some extent
2. Characters illustrate a particular point of view (e.g., loyalty, courage)
3. Conflict (if any) is psychological, although of immediate concern or of limited implication
4. Some ideas of limited scope which can be readily grasped are illustrated.

A book synopsis intended to be MOST sophisticated in general emphasized the following characteristics:

1. *Ideas, or theme, are important;* universal problems and values of fundamental concern to all human beings are illustrated by the story
2. The ideas expressed contribute to the development of a philosophy of life
3. Conflict (if any) is psychological, rather than physical
4. Characters stand up both as individual human beings and as symbols of broader implications.

An example of a set of story synopsis is included here.

33A (Reading Ease Grade Level=6.5)

A gang of rustlers tries to take over the town of Gold Creek. Marshal Case and his sidekick Reese are all that stand between the outlaws and the helpless town. This story tells how the quick thinking and straight shooting of these two lawmen save the town and put the rustlers behind bars.

33B (Reading Ease Grade Level=6.8)

Bart, son of a ranch owner, finds that he is drawn into a wild and vicious war between the cow men and the farmers. He is torn between his loyalty to his father and his sympathy with the cause of the farmers. This story shows how Bart acts as he tries to solve his problem.

33C (Reading Ease Grade Level-6.2)

It is a blazing gun duel; and Tex had won. Now, awestruck, he squatted down beside the man he'd just killed. A minute ago this man had thought and felt and wished. Now he was just a lump of rotting flesh. This story explores the consequences of the intentional taking of a life.

While the synopsis are illustrated here in a triad, on the final forms of SRIS they were presented as dyads: least-moderately, least-most, and moderately-most. Scoring is three points for choosing correctly the most sophisticated choice where it appears in a dyad, two points for a moderately sophisticated choice, and one point for a least sophisticated choice.

Validity, Reliability and Normative Data:

Content validity of SRIS was established in part by asking twenty secondary teachers the question, "Do you consider the criteria listed on the cover page (of the Teachers Validation Form of SRIS) to be in accordance with generally accepted standards for judging the sophistication of literature?" All twenty teachers answered "yes." Teachers also judged the level of sophistication of each synopsis in each dyad. An external criterion of validity

was sought in a comparison of teachers' ranking of students (in descending order of sophisticaion of interest in fiction) and with a ranking of the same students by their scores on the SRIS. Four correlations obtained ranged from .008 to .57.

Construct validity was established in part by comparing scores on the SRIS by younger and older students. The mean for twenty-five high ability seventh graders was 58.1, for twenty-one high ability twelfth graders 67.7, a difference of 9.6 points, significant at .001.

The Spearman-Brown reliability coefficient is .74.

Ordering information:

EDRS

Related documents:

Robert S. Zais, "A Scale to Measure Sophistication of Reading Interests," Journal of Reading, 12 (January 1969), 273-276, 326-335.

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Robert Zais
"Sophistication of Reading Interest Scale"
1968

SRIS ANSWER KEY

ITEM	SRIS LEVEL 1	2	3	FRC
1	A		B	
2		A	B	
3		A	B	
4				B
5	B	A		
6		B	A	
7				B
8	B	A		
9	B		A	
10		A	B	
11				A
12	B		A	
13	B		A	
14	A	B		
15	A	B		
16		A	B	
17	B	A		
18	A	B		
19	A		B	
20	A		B	

ITEM	SRIS LEVEL 1	2	3	FRC
21		B	A	
22				A
23		A	B	
24	A	B		
25		B	A	
26				A
27	A	B		
28	A		B	
29	B		A	

DO NOT WRITE ON THIS TEST BOOKLET. WRITE ALL ANSWERS ON ANSWER SHEET.

READING INTERESTS SCALE

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. We are simply attempting to find out what kind of fiction high-school students like to read.

On the following pages are short descriptions of stories. You have never read any of these stories, but the descriptions tell what they are about.

The story descriptions are presented two at a time and are lettered A and B. From each set of two story descriptions, choose the one which you think you would prefer to read and blacken in its letter on the answer sheet. For example, after reading descriptions A and B of set number 1, if you think you would rather read the story described in B, you would blacken the space under B for question 1 on your answer sheet.

In some cases it may be difficult to decide which story you would like to read. Even if you think you'd like (or dislike) both stories in a set, try your best to choose the one you think you'd prefer. Do not skip any sets; answer every set. There is no time limit, but you should be able to finish before the end of the period.

Remember, this is a reading interests scale; it is not a test. We are trying to find out what you really like to read. Be as honest as you can.

1. A) A jammed rocket forces Captain Jon Glen to land his space craft on a strange planet. The earth men find that the strange, underground residents of the planet are peaceful; but they are in great danger from a hostile race of Beetle men. Jon and his crew use strategy and earth weapons to help defeat the Beetle men. Gratefully, the underground people give them the parts they need to fix their space ship and get back to earth.

B) Magnetic fields shift; the earth starts to move closer to the sun. The planet is doomed and must be evacuated. Thus, a space fleet is launched to find a new planet. An ideal space paradise is found which is quite like the garden of Eden. This story describes the behavior of the first people to settle the new planet. It's a frank and brutal picture. People really do make their own heavens--and hells.

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2. A) Two killers escape into the jungle. They try to make it to the coast where a friend is waiting with a boat. Their distrust of each other is heightened by the constant threat from wild beasts, hostile natives, and other dangers. As the story unfolds, these two men reveal their hate and selfishness; it is soon clear what lives of violence and crime have done to them.

B) A true man of God insists that his wife and child go to Africa with him. He is willing to endure all hardships just to teach the tribes love of God. But the hardships of jungle life result in the death of his wife and child. Though his mission is a success, the minister learns too late that he has sacrificed two people to his principles; thus, he may have committed the greatest sin of all.

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3. A) Known as the "quiet spy," John Ring is a bright young English scholar. He is called in by the British Secret Service when staff agents are too well known. He knows literature well; this gives him insights into human nature. Thus, he can predict what his opponents will do next. A clever study of a fine mind pitted against the plots of foreign agents.

B) Kurt is quite a wise and knowing rogue. For years he has lived by selling secrets to both sides in the cold war. He points out that he couldn't succeed if it weren't for the stupid distrust of both sides. Kurt's dangerous spying makes a thrilling backdrop for this story. It strikes a sharp blow at the suspicion that prevents real dialogue among the nations of the world.

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4. A) When his paper won't print his story exposing the mayor as a crook, reporter Jack Starr quits. With two friends he starts his own paper. They launch a crusade to clean up City Hall. Threats, bombings, and phoney law suits almost put Jack out of business. But with the help of an honest district attorney, he finally wins.

B) This is the story of a tiny snow flake. It is born in heaven and begins a long journey to earth. As it flutters earthward, it becomes friendly with other little snow flakes. Some want to be snow men, while others just want to make trees look beautiful. Some get their wish, but others are blown far out to sea.

Turn the page and go on.

5. A) Igor, a young seaman, has been locked up without rations for sleeping on watch. But a friend has brought him food. The captain finds out and says he'll flog Igor if he doesn't tell who gave him the food. Igor wants to be loyal to his friend. But his fear of the captain makes him think about a not quite honorable choice. Igor's loyalty and fear provide conflict and suspense on this Viking ship.

B) Life on a Viking ship is portrayed in this story of Gar, a young apprentice seaman. He sets sail for the coast of Greenland three thousand years ago. Gar is mocked and persecuted by the crew because of his youth. He becomes a hero, though, when the ship almost breaks up in a storm. His courage and quiet thinking win the whole crew's admiration. They finally accept him as a full fledged seaman.

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6. A) It was a blazing gun duel; and Tex had won. Now, awe struck, he squatted down beside the man he'd just killed. A minute ago this man had thought and felt and wished. Now he was just a lump of rotting flesh. This story explores the consequences of the intentional taking of a life.

B) Bart, son of a ranch owner, finds that he is drawn into a wild and vicious war between the cow men and the farmers. He is torn between his loyalty to his father and his sympathy with the cause of the farmers. This story shows how Bart acts as he tries to solve his problem.

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7. A) Mike Cain is captured by the Japs when his plane is forced down. With ten other prisoners, he plans a daring escape down to the last detail. Suspense reaches it height on "E" night. The Americans execute their plan in a stunning strike. With guns blazing, they throw the Japs into total confusion and make it safely to the hills.

B) This is the story of John Woods, an office clerk. John keeps alert, works hard, and gets to be office manager. This story sets down the details of correct office practice. It shows how to file and handle all kinds of papers. John's skill in using what he knows to plan for the future results in a successful career.

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8. A) Kit and Liz listen terrified from their hiding place in the cellar as a dozen wild Indians burn their home and crops and steal their livestock. Kit is enraged by the destruction of what took two years of backbreaking labor to build. He swears revenge. Liz sees that this brutal man with a burning hate is not the Kit she married. It takes all of her strength and sympathy to help Kit find the will to rebuild their lives.

B) Paul and Dale hike to the top of a hill to get a better view of the landscape. They watch in horror as their camp is attacked by Indians. The whole wagon train is massacred. With only a knife and the clothes on their backs, this young couple meet danger and hardship as they struggle to survive in a wild, hostile land. After six thrill packed weeks, they are rescued by the cavalry.

Turn the page and go on.

9. A) In this story, a lion hunt is a symbol for man's instinct to kill--not for food or self defense, but just for the thrill. Mark Stone, as he hunts the lion, is portrayed as a beast: He has one desire--to kill. When the hunt ends, Stone is once more human; but the reader is left to wonder which Mark Stone represents man's real qualities.

B) A Cunning lion has been killing ranchers' sheep in Africa. Chad Mills leads a hunt to get it. The lion becomes treacherous and traps Mills. It takes every ounce of Mills' skill to escape the trap and corner the beast. How he finally makes the kill when his gun jams lends a thrilling climax to this adventure packed tale.

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10. A) John watched Miss Ames writing on the blackboard. He saw Paul and Ann and all of them copying it down in their notebooks. He wished he was playing football; but he knew he had to pass English to stay on the team. This story depicts the conflict between studies and athletics in John's life. It shows how John finally recognized the need for both.

B) Ralph wondered why he purposely failed all of his finals. He had wanted A's; he could easily have gotten them, too. But his folks wanted them, too--not for him, but so they could brag about their smart son. This story deals with a young man's search for his own identity and his rebellion against the role that had been chosen for him.

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11. A) Robert Brayton is a banker in New York. He invests in bonds and makes big loans to foreign firms. As his wealth grows, he becomes known as the wizard of finance. This story shows how Brayton manages his company's funds in the stock market; it explains the role of banks in the world of trade and finance.

B) Secret agent Ned Steele poses as a British traitor with secrets to sell. He wants to find out who is heading up a Red spy ring in England. The Reds find out who he really is; they send three Karate experts to finish him off. His spectacular escape proves to be the climax of this thrill packed adventure tale.

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12. A) A mountain lion has killed Ted Blake's small son. Blake swears revenge. He ruthlessly cuts down all who stand in his way. A chilling account of how terrible man can be when dominated by a single passion.

B) Four killers think old Sol has stolen their bank loot. Sol flees for his life deep into rugged mountain country. He knows this country well; the killers don't. Thus, in four thrilling clashes, Sol is able to finish his enemies one by one.

Turn the page and go on.

13. A) This sharp satire on teen behavior is centered on Lil. She's a young girl who has bright ideas on all subjects; yet, no one is ever quite sure what she'll do next. Lil's ups and downs are the same as those of all teens. The story deals with freedom, square ideas, love, and even "having nothing to do."

B) Ruth finds life hard because her Aunt Belle is always telling her mom not to "spoil her with too much freedom." But a riotous thing happens: Her aunt falls in love with a visiting TV star. Ruth and her mom have all they can do to keep her from making a fool of herself. Of course, when Aunt Belle recovers, she's no longer a problem.

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14. A) A GI company is cut off by a full regiment of crack German troops. Short of food and ammo, the Americans are in a bad spot. This story shows Captain Mark Shaw's courage and cunning. He makes up one of the most daring plans of the war. The Germans are baffled and the GI's go on to a smashing upset victory.

B) Sergeant Will Karns is a tough combat veteran. He has brought his squad through more tight spots than he cares to remember. But now he wonders how much longer his luck can hold; a fear of death suddenly grips him. This is the story of the struggle between fear and good combat judgment that Karns goes through on his last patrol.

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15. A) An ancient mummy is snatched from the Grande Museum in Paris. The great Girard is called in to solve the mystery, which has stumped the whole French police force. His search takes him through a dozen midnight episodes. But at last he learns who stole the mummy and <u>why</u>.

B) Durand, world famous French detective, is called to the home of Count du Monde. He is to find out if an old curse has caused the death of the Count's young wife. Durand's work is marked by careful research, close observations, and sure, cold logic. His methods make him one of the most fascinating sleuths in fiction.

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16. A) Captain Platt is a "gung ho" GO who has sworn that his unit will be the best on the post. Captain Lark is just the reverse: He's an easy going guy who just takes the army with a grain of salt. This story contrasts these two characters. The sparks that fly when the clash make this one of the funniest stories to come out of the war.

B) Private Kane is a born comic. His jokes and clowning help his buddies endure army life and the hardships of war. When the going gets tough, he's at his best; he creates and satires at the expense of stuffy colonels, hard nosed sergeants, the Germans, and even the men themselves. This story shows how much humor means to the strength of the human spirit.

Turn the page and go on.

17. A) Faye Warde is a young school teacher whose first job is a run down slum school. The pupils decide to "show her who's boss"; they make things unbearable for her. The principal advises her to "crack down hard"; but Miss Warde refuses. She has faith in treating the pupils with kindness and respct. One by one, she wins the class over, and the principal learns a lesson in "discipline through kindness."

B) Miss Kent is a new teacher at Ford High. She is shocked to learn that a group of bullies is forcing the younger pupils to pay ten cents a week for "protection." Though the principal knows about it, he can't do much because the victims are too scared to talk. In this story, Miss Kent's shrewd plan to trap the bullies almost backfires; but they're finally caught and given the punishment they deserve.

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18. A) Walking home after school, Anne Barnes sees a hit and run car kill an old man and speed off. She gets the car's number and gives it to the police. But nothing is done. She then decides to investigate on her own. Her bright detective work gets her into many tight spots. Three attempts are even made on her life. But the result is the capture of the guilty driver and the arrest of a bribed police captain.

B) Pam Wayne's dad sees a gang of toughs run down an old man. The next day he gets a note threatening Pam's life if he talks. He decides to keep quiet; but Pam learns about the note and insists on going to the police. In spite of the terror she feels after two unsuccessful attempts on her life, Pam's courage prevails. Her strength provides an inspiring lesson for her father.

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19. A) Madge Peters finds out that her best friend, Jan, has been secretly seeing Bob. She at first wants to confront them with it and break off with Bob. But loving Bob as she does, she can't bear to lose him. Recovering from the original shock, she plans an ingenious campaign. She not only wins Bob back, but teaches Jan a lesson in the meaning of friendship.

B) When Ted asks Lynn to marry him, Lynn goes to her mother for advice. Her mother helps--but in a strange way. She relates the stories of three women she had known. Each took the advice of others and was forever sorry. The theme treats the personal nature of love; it shows that each lover must base his decision on feelings that can be known by no one but him.

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20. A) Marc is a great Roman general. He is sent with twelve thousand crack troops to stop the advance of fifty thousand barbarians from the North. This story is set in the great splendor of ancient Rome; it tells how Marc has to put down threats from spies, corrupt nobles, and traitors before he can go on to save Rome from the attack of the hordes from the North.

B) This is the epic of a great Roman family. It takes place during a crucial one hundred year span in Roman times. The family gets to be more and more wealthy and well known; but its members are less and less able to find meaning in life. Greed, jealousy, and cruelty become a way of life with them. The theme shows how the corrupting force of power and wealth can kill all hope for real happiness.

Turn the page and go on.

21. A) Ted Simms, a cub reporter, is sent to interview Al Mac, a convict who is waiting to go to the gas chamber. As they talk, the two young men become friends. They tell each other their life stories. The contrast in their childhoods shocks Simms. Through this experience, he learns how poverty leads men to go back to their brutal animal natures in order to survive.

B) In this story, a hard boiled veteran reporter brags about the twenty tough years he's put in on the police beat. As he tells his fascinating stories, it turns out that he's not as hard as he seems. He knows that a lot of kids go wrong because of a bad break in life. Inside, he's a human, sympathetic man.

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22. A) This is a charming tale of a fairy princess with long golden hair. She is placed under a spell by a wicked witch. A handsome prince who loves her tries to wake her. But he must endure many trials and fight a dragon. Finally, he kills the witch and gets the potion that wakes his sweetheart from the witch's spell.

B) A gang of rustlers tries to take over the town of Gold Creek. Marshal Case and his side kick Reese are all that stand between the outlaws and the helpless town. This story tells how the quick thinking and straight shooting of these two lawmen save the town and put the rustlers behind bars.

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23. A) Ensign Cole, fresh out of OCS, boards the cruiser Sharpe for his first hitch of sea duty. At first he has only contempt for enlisted men. But his contempt soon turns to respect. He learns that success in battle depends less on his "leadership" than on his men's respect for him as a man.

B) U.S. and Jap PT boats clash in a life or death battle. After a brutal two hour duel, the ships are wrecked by a brief, violent storm. But every man tries hard to help the others, regardless of race. The story shows how strong man's ties are to his fellow man. They are stronger than the differences set up by nations.

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24. A) Jane has fallen deeply in love with Doug, captain of West High's baseball team. Of course, Doug doesn't know Jane exists. No matter how she makes herself up, he doesn't give her a tumble. During Christmas vacation, Jane's cousin Pat, who is a model, visits her. With the help of her cousin's know how, Jane makes certain changes. She not only astounds her friends, but she has Doug eating out of her hand.

B) Bea is a very pretty and popular cheer leader. But she is quite stuck up. A bad car crash leaves her face twisted and full of scars. Bea is no longer rushed by the boys; she is snubbed by many of her old friends. Plastic surgery is done during the summer months, and she comes back to school more lovely than ever. Now she is more modest and a lot wiser about accepting shallow admiration.

Turn the page and go on.

25. A) The men of the cruiser Hale cheer loudly when the oil slick confirms their sinking of the German sub. Then the body of a young German sailor bobs to the surface; all cheering quickly stops. The full meaning of the sinking is clear. Clouds darken, winds blow, and the sea rises in an awesome storm. The sea becomes a symbol of nature's wrath at this violation of sacred moral law.

B) The North Sea convoy run during World War II takes its toll on the men of a Britis war ship. A young sailor falls overboard. Captain Tate won't stop for a rescue attempt because of the danger to the convoy. His action has a bad effect on the crew. They all condemn him as a killer. This story portrays a character whose sense of duty triumphs when he has a hard choice to make.

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26. A) This is the story of Bobo, a young bear cub. Bobo loves honey, but his mother has warned him not to get his nose into a bee hive. Poor Bobo doesn't take his mother's advice and gets stung when he goes poking into a hive. He saves himself by jumping into the river.

B) Stan was a bookworm; he always got A's, but had no friends at all. One day he is pushed down and humilated by a football letter man; he then vows to do something about himself. This story tells how Stan sheds his glasses, goes into training, and gets to be one of the school's most popular athletes.

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27. A) John Roe is hired by the owners of a mill. His job is to put down some rioters who plan to wreck the plant. He finds that the rioters are former workers who were fired. They had struck for higher pay. In an action packed story marked by fights and conflicts, Roe gets the stubborn mill owners to pay the workers what they deserve.

B) John Roan, chairman of the board is a hard, cold, reasoning man. But he is a fair man. Bill Lear, union head, is quite emotional and sensitive to man's suffering. When these two men clash in a fight over wages and long hours at the Roan Mills, riots break out. In the end, each one grows in his ability to understand the er.

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28. A) Demos, a Greek slave, goes with his master, General Hermes, to do battle with the fierce Quants. The Quants break through the Greek lines and the general is killed. Demos, wearing the general's helmet and riding his horse rallies the Greeks. In a thrill packed charge, they wipe out the Quants. Demos is acclaimed general, but he declines; he wants only to live his life as a free man.

B) Athens and Sparta want peace; but each fears the other's motives. This is the story of Thad, an old general who speaks for the entrenched military group. His loyalty to Sparta leads him to plan a war to prevent an attack from Athens. How fear, distrust, lack of vision, and love of country can combine to make the wars that no one wants.

Turn the page and go on.

29. A) Jill tells her mom that Bill has proposed and that she has said "yes." All at once her mom feels a painful sense of loss; she recalls the many happy events of Jill's growing up. Then she recalls her own breaking away; she knows that Jill will have the same feelings if she has a daughter. A story that portrays the human cycle of parenthood from a mother's point of view.

B) Dale is sent to live with her grand parents; but she finds that their old fashioned ideas always put a damper on her freedom and good times. They are so strict that Dale's social life is almost wrecked. This story tells how a bright girl uses psychology and a few tricks of her own. In the end, she gets her grandparents to modernize their ideas.

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Wanted: An instrument to determine the level of sophistication at which instruction in literature should begin and to evaluate the growth achieved.

A Scale to Measure Sophistication of Reading Interests

ROBERT S. ZAIS

Rationale for the Scale

THE IMPORTANCE OF developing the quality of students' responses to literature has been widely recognized. As a result, numerous "tests of appreciation" have been developed and many less objective devices have been advocated as a source of clues to the maturity of students' sensitivity to literature.

But the ability to identify, analyze, or even respond to sophisticated literature is no guarantee that the individual will feel compelled to choose such fare for his personal reading; the level of sophistication of his *interests* may well be below that of his *abilities*.

As Gray, among others, has observed, "The fact has long been recognized that one of the best measures of the vitality of the reading programs in our schools is the extent and quality of the personal reading of children and youth." (2) Thus, the evaluation of growth in sophistication of reading interests has most often taken the form of observing the reader's progression through "freely chosen" reading materials. The limited effectiveness of this technique is generally conceded, however, because the "free choice" of the reader is subject to such contaminating influences as availability, adult influence, and readability (including also format and typography). Furthermore, even if such influences could be controlled, the investigator is rarely able to determine exactly which factors in the preferred books appealed to the reader.

What seems to be called for is an instrument which is based upon characteristics present in varying degrees in all fiction and which provides a reasonably accurate estimate of sophistication of interests without reference to titles reported read. Such an instrument could be useful in determining the level of sophistication

at which instruction in literature should begin and in evaluating the growth that has been achieved with instruction.

Construction and Validation of the SRIS

The *Sophistication of Reading Interests Scale (SRIS)* constructed by the writer attempted to estimate the relative level of sophistication of high school students' interest in fiction. The scale was patterned after Robert L. Thorndike's fictitious annotated titles questionnaire. (*6*) Thorndike's technique made it possible to obtain subjects' reactions to a wide range of different topics within a feasible testing period by presenting subjects with such items as the following:

YES NO ? *LITTLE TONY'S PONY*
A pony hero who saved his master after he had fallen and hurt himself.

Fictitious items made it possible to explore topics of *interest* rather than interest in any specific book.

In the *SRIS*, fictitious story synopses were used instead of annotated titles. It was felt that the level of sophistication of fiction could be conveyed more precisely by means of brief story synopses than by annotated titles. In the *SRIS*, subjects were presented with a pair of story synopses which had been validated for level of sophistication; subjects were then asked to indicate which of the two they would prefer to read. This format made it possible to equate pairs of synopses for such factors as subject matter, setting, and sex and age of protagonist, while allowing the level of sophistication to vary. Thus, the influence of extraneous factors was minimized, and insofar as possible choice was forced solely on the basis of level of sophistication.

RATIONALE FOR SOPHISTICATION IN THE SRIS

The rationale for sophistication in the construction of the *SRIS* was an adaptation of Ryan's schema of probable direction of growth in interests in the reading of fiction (*5*) and Gray and Rogers' indicators of maturity in fiction (*3*). From these writers' principles, criteria were derived for writing fictitious story synopses at three graduated levels of sophistication. The criteria are as follows:

ROBERT S. ZAIS is *Assistant Professor of Secondary Education, Kent State University.* *This article is based on his dissertation: "The Sophistication of Reading Interests as Related to Selected Personality Factors and Certain Other Characteristics of High School Students," University of Connecticut, 1968. His major advisor was Professor P. T. Pritzkau, Professor of Education.*

A book synopsis intend
emphasized the following cl

1. *Plot is important* for its
2. The plot is hackneyed devices
3. Conflict (if any) is physi
4. Characters are stereotyp for the action.

A book synopsis intend
in general emphasized the f

1. *Characters are importan*
2. Characters illustrate a courage)
3. Conflict (if any) is psyc cern or of limited impli
4. Some ideas of limited s illustrated.

A book synopsis intende
emphasized the following cha

1. *Ideas, or theme, are imp* of fundamental concern the story
2. The ideas expressed con osophy of life
3. Conflict (if any) is psych
4. Characters stand up both symbols of broader impli

CONSTRUCTION OF THE PRELIMI

With these criteria serving each containing three story syn sis (A) was intended to rep one (B), a "moderately sophis sophisticated" story. Insofar a each triad were equated for setting (both time and place general type of story (e.g., war types used were those which to be appealing to high school all synopses was sixth-grade le Ease Formula (*1*). The followi

should begin and in evaluating with instruction.

on of the SRIS

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ONY'S PONY
o who saved his master after he had hurt himself.

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nopses were used instead of an- level of sophistication of fiction y means of brief story synopses *SRIS*, subjects were presented had been validated for level of asked to indicate which of the his format made it possible to ctors as subject matter, setting. allowing the level of sophistica- of extraneous factors was mini- e was forced solely on the basis

E SRIS

in the construction of the *SRIS* of probable direction of growth (5) and Gray and Rogers' indica- these writers' principles, criteria ory synopses at three graduated are as follows:

of Secondary Education, Kent State his dissertation: "The Sophistication of l Personality Factors and Certain Other ," University of Connecticut, 1968. His kau, Professor of Education.

A book synopsis intended to be LEAST sophisticated in general emphasized the following characteristics:

1. *Plot is important* for its own sake
2. The plot is hackneyed and employs standard or implausible devices
3. Conflict (if any) is physical, rather than psychological
4. Characters are stereotyped and are introduced merely as vehicles for the action.

A book synopsis intended to be MODERATELY sophisticated in general emphasized the following characteristics:

1. *Characters are important* and are individualized to some extent
2. Characters illustrate a particular point of view (e.g., loyalty, courage)
3. Conflict (if any) is psychological, although of immediate concern or of limited implication
4. Some ideas of limited scope which can be readily grasped are illustrated.

A book synopsis intended to be MOST sophisticated in general emphasized the following characteristics:

1. *Ideas, or theme, are important;* universal problems and values of fundamental concern to all human beings are illustrated by the story
2. The ideas expressed contribute to the development of a philosophy of life
3. Conflict (if any) is psychological, rather than physical
4. Characters stand up both as individual human beings and as symbols of broader implications.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE PRELIMINARY FORM OF THE SRIS

With these criteria serving as guidelines, 39 triads were written, each containing three story synopses. Within each triad, one synopsis (A) was intended to represent a "least sophisticated" story; one (B), a "moderately sophisticated" story; and one (C), a "most sophisticated" story. Insofar as was possible, the three synopses of each triad were equated for length (within a ten-word limit); setting (both time and place); age and sex of protagonist; and general type of story (e.g., war, science-fiction, love, animals). Story types used were those which reading interests research has found to be appealing to high school students. The reading difficulty of all synopses was sixth-grade level, according to the Flesch Reading Ease Formula (*1*). The following is a sample triad:

33A (Reading Ease Grade Level = 6.5)

A gang of rustlers tries to take over the town of Gold Creek. Marshal Case and his sidekick Reese are all that stand between the outlaws and the helpless town. This story tells how the quick thinking and straight shooting of these two lawmen save the town and put the rustlers behind bars.

33B (Reading Ease Grade Level = 6.8)

Bart, son of a ranch owner, finds that he is drawn into a wild and vicious war between the cow men and the farmers. He is torn between his loyalty to his father and his sympathy with the cause of the farmers. This story shows how Bart acts as he tries to solve his problem.

33C (Reading Ease Grade Level = 6.2)

It is a blazing gun duel; and Tex had won. Now, awestruck, he squatted down beside the man he'd just killed. A minute ago this man had thought and felt and wished. Now he was just a lump of rotting flesh. This story explores the consequences of the intentional taking of a life.

Thirty-nine of these triads (117 story synopses) comprised the Preliminary Form of the SRIS.

CONTENT VALIDITY OF THE SRIS

In order to establish that the synopses comprising the Preliminary Form of the *SRIS* actually represented the levels of sophistication intended by the writer, a Teachers' Validation Form of the scale was submitted to a panel of judges for validation. The panel of judges consisted of twenty teachers of secondary English who were certified in their respective states and who had a minimum of two years of classroom teaching experience.

The Teachers' Validation Form of the *SRIS* was the same as the Preliminary Form described in the preceding section except that the triads, and synopses within triads, had been rearranged into random order by means of a random number table (*4*). The twenty judges were asked to rank the synopses in each triad for level of sophistication (i.e., least, moderately, or most sophisticated). Kendall's coefficient of concordance (W) was then employed to determine the degree to which the judges agreed in ranking the synopses for level of sophistication. Table 1 details the coefficients of concordance computed for each of the 39 triads.

[*Continued on page 326*

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Education Gets Nashville Readi

KEN MORRELL

THE SEVENTH-GRADE BOY
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Subscriptions for nine issues of *Educational Product Report*, October 1968 through June 1969, may be ordered at $35.00 from The EPIE Institute, 356 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016. A request to the same address will bring further information about more detailed services for individual school systems.

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Scale of Reading Interests

Continued from page 270

TABLE 1

Kendall Coefficients of Concordance (W)* for the Thirty-Nine Triads of the *SRIS*

Triad	*Kendall (W)*	*Triad*	*Kendall (W)*	*Triad*	*Kendall (W)*	*Triad*	*Kendall (W)*
1	.8400	11	.7675	21	1.0000	31	.9525
2	.8400	12	.7825	22	.9100	32	.9525
3	.7900	13	.6975	23	.5725	33	1.0000
4	.9100	14	.6775	24	.9100	34	.6975
5	.8575	15	.8100	25	.8725	35	.8725
6	.9525	16	.9100	26	.9025	36	.9525
7	1.0000	17	.6825	27	.7900	37	.9025
8	.9525	18	.8725	28	.7075	38	1.0000
9	1.0000	19	.9100	29	.9525	39	.8725
10	.7675	20	.9100	30	1.0000		

* All coefficients significant beyond the .01 level

Table 1 shows that the coefficients observed for the 39 triads ranged from .5725 to 1.0. It should be noted that under the conditions here stipulated (i.e., twenty judges, three objects to be ranked), a coefficient of .2212 is significant at the .01 level of confidence. Thus, the coefficients for all 39 triads may be interpreted as being highly significant.

VALIDITY OF CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION

In order to determine whether the writer's simplification and syntheses of Ryan's and Gray and Rogers' criteria was acceptable to secondary English teachers as a standard for judging the sophistication of literature, the following question was included on the Teachers' Validation Form of the *SRIS*: "Do you consider the

criteria listed on the cover page t
accepted standards for judging the
twenty respondents checked "yes".

PILOT FORM OF THE SRIS

It occurred to the writer that
synopses instead of *triads* had th
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preferred synopsis from a group
with *pairs* instead of *triads*, testing
However, pairing the synopses ha
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In order to retain the three-l
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were used in constructing the th
Pilot Form of the *SRIS:*

1. Ten pairs, each made up of a
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2. Ten pairs, each made up of a
cated synopsis
3. Ten pairs, each made up of
synopsis.

By assigning values of 1, 2, ar
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The decision to use pairs in th
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of each triad would be used. It was
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to be eliminated because two of th
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however, while 19 of the 20 teacher
triad was *least* sophisticated, only
moderately sophisticated and that sy
Thus, there was no justification for
or 14C in the Pilot Form of the *SRI*

To determine which synopses
tabulation of the number of judg
synopsis represented a particular le

criteria listed on the cover page to be in accordance with generally accepted standards for judging the sophistication of literature?" All twenty respondents checked "yes" in answering this question.

PILOT FORM OF THE SRIS

It occurred to the writer that presenting students with *pairs* of synopses instead of *triads* had the advantage of reducing the intellectual burden involved in reading, retaining, and selecting a preferred synopsis from a group of three. By presenting students with *pairs* instead of *triads*, testing time was considerably reduced. However, pairing the synopses had at least one significant disadvantage: it tended to dichotomize options, producing a sophisticated-unsophisticated polarity instead of the desired graduation of sophistication levels.

In order to retain the three-level sensitivity in the *SRIS* and still use the paired format, three different types of paired synopses were used in constructing the thirty items which made up the Pilot Form of the *SRIS:*

1. Ten pairs, each made up of a *least* and a *moderately* sophisticated synopsis
2. Ten pairs, each made up of a *moderately* and a *most* sophisticated synopsis
3. Ten pairs, each made up of a *least* and a *most* sophisticated synopsis.

By assigning values of 1, 2, and 3 to synopses which were, respectively, least, moderately, and most sophisticated, a graduated range of scores on sophistication was provided for.

The decision to use pairs in the Pilot Form of the *SRIS* necessitated the development of criteria to determine which two synopses of each triad would be used. It was immediately clear that, although all 39 triads qualified for inclusion in the *SRIS* by virtue of their significant Kendall coefficients, certain of the triads would have to be eliminated because two of their three synopses could not be sufficiently discriminated by the validating teachers. For example, the Kendall coefficient for triad #14 was a highly significant .6775; however, while 19 of the 20 teachers agreed that synopsis *A* of this triad was *least* sophisticated, only ten agreed that synopsis *B* was *moderately* sophisticated and that synopsis *C* was *most* sophisticated. Thus, there was no justification for including either synopsis 14B or 14C in the Pilot Form of the *SRIS*.

To determine which synopses might justifiably be included, a tabulation of the number of judges agreeing that a particular synopsis represented a particular level of sophistication was made

(i.e., the number of judges agreeing that synopsis *A* was *least* sophisticated).

Utilizing a binomial model with N = 20 and p = .5, the writer determined that, under the null hypothesis, the probability of agreement among sixteen or more teachers was less than .01. Consequently, only those synopses whose level of sophistication had been agreed upon by at least sixteen of the twenty judges were eligible for inclusion in the Pilot Form of the *SRIS*.

Those pairs of synopses representing the highest level of agreement among teachers were selected for inclusion. Table 2 shows the dyads (formerly triads) selected for inclusion and the number of judges agreeing on the level of sophistication of each synopsis.

TABLE 2

Number of Judges• Agreeing on A=1 (Least Sophisticated), B=2 (Moderately Sophisticated), and C=3 (Most Sophisticated) for the Synopses Included in the Pilot Form of the *SRIS*

Dyad••	*Synop. A*	*Synop. B*	*Dyad*••	*Synop. A*	*Synop. B*	*Dyad*••	*Synop. A*	*Synop. B*
29	20	19	7	20	20	39	20	17
6	20	19	38	20	20	35	20	17
20	20	18	30	20	20	25	20	17
4	20	18	9	20	20	2	20	16
24	20	18	33	20	20	1	20	16
22	20	18	21	20	20	5	19	18
19	20	18	36	19	20	12	19	17
16	19	18	32	19	19	11	18	17
37	19	18	31	19	19	15	18	16
16	18	18	8	19	19	18	17	20

• N=20; Agreement $\geq$16, p. <.01

•• Dyad numbers correspond to triad numbers of the preliminary form of the *SRIS*

The 30 pairs chosen were then randomized by the same method used in randomizing the items of the Teachers' Validation Form.

CONTROL FOR FAKING AND SOCIAL DESIRABILITY OF RESPONSES

Five "catch" items (false response checks) were included in the Pilot Form of the *SRIS*. The false response check (FRC) was a pair of synopses which appeared to be similar to the regular dyads of the *SRIS*, but which included one synopsis written for minimum appeal. The following is an example of such a set:

(A) Mike Cain is ca
down. With ten oth
to the last detail. Sus
Americans execute th
blazing, they throw
safely to the hills.

(B) This is the story
alert, works hard, an
down the details of
and handle all kinds
knows to plan for the

It would seem that
would genuinely prefer
would be very few indeed
tion, five FRC dyads w
SRIS for student valida
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Pilot Form. Table 3 s
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	Number of Students P Synopse
Number of students preferri maximum-appeal synopsis (Sy	
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TOTAL	

• All ratios significant beyon

These data were te
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The proportions observe
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ill-considered responses and for faking and social desirability of responses.

EMPIRICAL VALIDITY

In the absence of a well-established relevant external criterion, English teachers' rankings of their students for sophistication of interest in fiction was settled on as a reasonable substitute.

Consequently, a pilot study was made of four English classes: 1) a heterogeneous twelfth-grade (N = 18); 2) a heterogeneous ninth-grade (N = 24); 3) an intellectually superior twelfth-grade (N = 21); and 4) an intellectually superior seventh-grade (N = 25). The teacher of each class was asked to rank his students (one through N) in descending order of sophistication of interest in fiction. After the *SRIS* was administered and scored, each student was assigned a second ranking according to his placement in terms of his test score.

Spearman's coefficient of rank relation (*rho*) was used to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the teacher's rankings and the rankings based on *SRIS* scores.

TABLE 4

Correlation of Teachers' Rankings of Students for Sophistication of Interests and Students' Ranks in Terms of SRIS Scores

Group	*r*	*Level of Significance*
Twelfth-grade heterogeneous group (N = 18)	.5766	.01
Ninth-grade heterogeneous group (N = 24)	.3962	.05
Twelfth-grade superior group (N = 21)	.0576	NS
Seventh-grade superior group (N = 25)	.0084	NS

On the basis of the coefficients shown in Table 4, it would appear that only in a very small measure is the *SRIS* providing estimates of what English teachers intuitively conceive of as sophistication of interest in literary materials. The substantial discrepancy between teachers' rankings and rankings based on *SRIS* scores suggests contamination from extraneous factors, possibly originating in both the teachers' rankings and in the rankings based on *SRIS* scores.

It may be worth pointing out, however, that the teachers' rankings conformed very closely to academic performance. While

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CONSTRUCT VALIDITY OF TH

It seemed logical to
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Twelfth-grade heterogeneous grou
Ninth-grade heterogeneous group

It will be noted that
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l)	.0576	NS
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e out, however, that the teachers' to academic performance. While

English teachers (consciously or unconsciously) apparently equate performance in English with sophistication of interest in literature, such a relationship may not exist.

Whatever the case may be, it is clear that teachers' rankings do not constitute what might be called an established relevant external criterion. Evidence which supports the contention that the *SRIS is* providing scores which at least approximately reflect sophistication of interest in fiction is presented in the following section.

CONSTRUCT VALIDITY OF THE SRIS

It seemed logical to assume that the mean *SRIS* score for older high school students would be higher than that for younger high school students; and that intellectually superior students would have a higher mean *SRIS* score than would a general cross section of students. Table 5 shows the mean scores and standard deviations for the four groups of students who were administered the *SRIS* in the pilot study.

TABLE 5

Means and Standard Deviations of Four Selected High School Groups Taking the *SRIS*

Group	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*
Twelfth-grade intellectually superior group (N = 21)	67.7	5.7
Seventh-grade intellectually superior group (N = 25)	58.1	4.9
Twelfth-grade heterogeneous group (N = 18)	62.8	7.8
Ninth-grade heterogeneous group (N = 24)	60.6	5.9

It will be noted that the magnitude of the means shows a logical pattern. For example, the twelfth-grade intellectually superior group achieved the highest mean score, while the twelfth-grade heterogeneous group achieved the second highest. The youngest students (seventh grade) achieved the lowest mean score.

A test for the significance of the difference between two means for independent samples was calculated for three paired groups. The data in Table 6 tend to suggest that age (particularly during the years of *early* adolescence) is an important determiner of sophis-

tication of interest in fiction. Intelligence also appears to be an important factor, although somewhat less so than age. These inferences, in general, agree with the findings of previous reading interests research. Thus, it would not seem unreasonable to assume that the *SRIS* is in some measure providing at least an approximate measurement of sophistication of interest in fiction.

TABLE 6

Significance of the Difference between Mean *SRIS* Scores for Selected Groups in the Pilot Study

Group	*Mean*	*Difference Between Means*	*Significance Level of Difference Between Means*
Twelfth-grade intellectually superior group (N = 21)	67.7		
Seventh-grade intellectually superior group (N = 25)	58.1		
		9.6	.001
Twelfth-grade heterogeneous group (N = 18)	62.8		
Ninth-grade heterogeneous group (N = 24)	60.6		
		2.2	NS
Twelfth-grade intellectually superior group (N = 21)	67.7		
Twelfth-grade heterogeneous group (N = 18)	62.8		
		4.9	.05

RELIABILITY OF THE SRIS

Reliability of the *SRIS* was computed by the split-half method. Although the most common procedure is to obtain scores on odd and even numbered items of a test, the fact that the *SRIS* was composed of three different types of test items necessitated a different approach.

First, the items of the *SRIS* were arranged according to type (i.e., least / moderate dyads, least / most dyads, and moderate / most dyads). From each of the three groups, half of the dyads were selected at random. As a result, the *SRIS* was split into two

equivalent forms, each conta
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The correlation between
scale was found to be .5928.
Brown formula, resulted in
.7443, which was considered
involved.

ITEM DISCRIMINATION IN THE S

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	A	C	
H	1	9	10
L	7	3	10
	8	12	

In most cases, the majority
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ce between Mean *SRIS* Scores ps in the Pilot Study

Mean	*Difference Between Means*	*Significance Level of Difference Between Means*
67.7		
58.1	9.6	.001
62.8		
60.6	2.2	NS
67.7		
62.8	4.9	.05

omputed by the split-half method. edure is to obtain scores on odd test, the fact that the *SRIS* was s of test items necessitated a dif-

were arranged according to type most dyads, and moderate / most groups, half of the dyads were t, the *SRIS* was split into two

equivalent forms, each containing half of each of the three types of dyads.

The correlation between the scores on the two forms of the scale was found to be .5928. This coefficient, used in the Spearman-Brown formula, resulted in a whole test reliability coefficient of .7443, which was considered adequate for the research purposes involved.

ITEM DISCRIMINATION IN THE SRIS

Each dyad of the Pilot Form of the *SRIS* was tested to determine the degree to which it was able to distinguish between high and low scorers. The ten highest and the ten lowest scorers in the pilot study were selected, a 2 x 2 contingency table was prepared for each dyad, and a chi square test was made to determine the significance of the difference in the choices of high scorers and low scorers.

FIGURE 1

Example of Contingency Table Used to Calculate the Significance of the Difference between the Choices of High Scorers and Low Scorers on the *SRIS* Using a Chi Square Test of the Difference

	A	C	
H	1	9	10
L	7	3	10
	8	12	

A = Low sophistication synopsis
C = High sophistication synopsis
H = High scoring group
L = Low scoring group

In most cases, the majority of the high scorers chose the more sophisticated synopsis, while the majority of the low scorers chose the less sophisticated synopsis. The size of these majorities varied, however, as did the level of significance associated with them. Table 7 shows the level of significance associated with the differences in the choices of the high and low groups for each dyad in the Pilot Form of the *SRIS*.

TABLE 7

Level of Significance at Which Each Dyad Differentiates between High and Low Scorers on the Pilot Form of the *SRIS*

Dyad No.	*Level of Significance*	*Dyad No.*	*Level of Significance*	*Dyad No.*	*Level of Significance*
1	.05	14	.001	25	.10
2	.01	15	.10	26	.10
3	.10	16	.05	27	.02
4	.05	17	.001	28	.10
6	.02	18	.05	29	.02
7	.05	19	.01	30	.10
9	.20	20	.001	32	.05
11	.01	21	.001	33	.10
12	.001	22	.01	34	.05
13	.05	23	.01	35	.001

Because of the overall consistency of the pattern, a significance level of .10 was considered fairly conclusive evidence that a test item differentiated between the high and low scorers. However, certain items having low levels of significance for discriminating efficiency were eliminated in an attempt to improve the instrument. This procedure is described in the following section.

TESTING FORM OF THE SRIS

It seemed reasonable to assume that the efficiency of the *SRIS* would be improved by eliminating items which failed to discriminate at a highly significant level. Consequently, six dyads with a probability level of .10 or greater were eliminated from the Testing Form of the *SRIS*, resulting in a total of 24 dyads plus five FRC dyads, or 29 items.

To determine whether shortening the test by six items would adversely affect the reliability of the instrument (a coefficient of .7443), the two halves of the shorter form were correlated, and a coefficient of .5852 was obtained. This coefficient, used in the Spearman-Brown formula, resulted in a whole test reliability of .7383. This coefficient was not significantly lower than that obtained for the longer form of the test.

Conclusion

This scale to measure the sophistication of high school students' interest in fiction is not presented as a definitive measurement of this psychological construct indicates that objective est tional patterns can be mad tional and submitting them

Certainly, the scale is ir content validity appears tc relevant outside criterion is and construct validity could testing and revision.

Nor is the scale, even v be used as *the* criterion fo As with all psychological pa tive in its definition of th intended only to provide a used on conjunction with help teachers achieve more ac

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Paperbacks in the Classroom

Continued from page 298]

Implications

Except for surveys deal misuse, knowledge or lack o in American schools, researcl room is scanty. Paperbacks For example, Braam and Be experimental treatment to in rate, comprehension, and fle could have used hardcover b cover books did.

BLE 7

Each Dyad Differentiates between the Pilot Form of the *SRIS*

Level of Significance	*Dyad No.*	*Level of Significance*
.001	25	.10
.10	26	.10
.05	27	.02
.001	28	.10
.05	29	.02
.01	30	.10
.001	32	.05
.001	33	.10
.01	34	.05
.01	35	.001

ency of the pattern, a significance
y conclusive evidence that a test
high and low scorers. However,
of significance for discriminating
attempt to improve the instru-
d in the following section.

ne that the efficiency of the *SRIS*
ıg items which failed to discrimi-
Consequently, six dyads with a
ater were eliminated from the
ting in a total of 24 dyads plus

ning the test by six items would
the instrument (a coefficient of
rter form were correlated, and a
d. This coefficient, used in the
d in a whole-test reliability of
ificantly lower than that obtained

istication of high school students'
l as a definitive measurement of

this psychological construct. Rather, the construction of the scale indicates that objective estimates of seemingly intangible motivational patterns can be made through making the patterns operational and submitting them to statistical analysis.

Certainly, the scale is in need of further refinement. Although content validity appears to be very good, further work with a relevant outside criterion is clearly needed. In addition, reliability and construct validity could undoubtedly be improved with further testing and revision.

Nor is the scale, even with extensive refinement, intended to be used as *the* criterion for sophistication of interest in fiction. As with all psychological paper-and-pencil tests, it is highly restrictive in its definition of the construct being tested. Thus, it is intended only to provide additional reliable data which can be used on conjunction with other non-standardized information to help teachers achieve more accurate assessments of students' interests.

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Paperbacks in the Classroom

Continued from page 298]

Implications

Except for surveys dealing with attitudes, preferences, use, misuse, knowledge or lack of knowledge about paperback books in American schools, research related to paperbacks in the classroom is scanty. Paperbacks certainly can be used in research. For example, Braam and Berger used paperbacks as part of an experimental treatment to investigate ways of increasing reading rate, comprehension, and flexibility (*3*). But Braam and Berger could have used hardcover books to do the same thing that softcover books did.